Montana's Solution

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FOR E-RATE

- Establish E-rate Eligible Contracts
- Build out a State Network
- Provide State Coordination

BY E-RATE

- Utilize E-rate funds to establish a State Network
- Utilize E-rate funds to reduce the cost of Internet Access

Solution For E-rate: E-rate Eligible State Master Contracts (SMC)

- SMCs would relieve all entities in the state of the burdensome procurement process.
- SMCs ensure state, local and e-rate compliance.
- SMCs usually generate lower pricing.
- SMCs create improved vendor/customer relationships (one throat to choke).
- SMCs can be single award or multi-award.

Solution For E-rate: Build Out a State Network

- The State could establish node sites across the state to facilitate local connectivity to the network.
- The State could pay for the backbone circuits…circuits that would provide high speed connectivity across the state.
- The State could be the anchor tenant for the deployment of broadband connectivity to every community in the state.
- End users only have to be concerned with their local connection.

Solution For E-rate: Provide State E-rate Coordination

- The State could provide E-rate coordination at the State level.
- The State could work with PIA to expedite the review process of the applicants.
- The State could provide an E-rate help desk.
- The State can cross agency boundaries and work with Schools, Libraries, and other State Entities to ensure program compliance and consistency in information.

Solution By E-rate: Utilize E-rate Funds to Build out a State Network

- The State could become a consortium lead and could be an e-rate applicant.
- The State could build out a statewide network that is shared by schools, libraries, and all other State entities.
- The portion of the network that is utilized by schools and libraries would be eligible for e-rate support.
- E-rate can be a funding source for the deployment of a state network.

Solution By E-rate: Utilize E-rate funds to reduce the cost of Internet Access (IA)

- The State could centralize IA at a single POP or could centralize IA at regional POPs (with one or more providers).
- Centralized IA can provide access to higher bandwidth circuits.
- Centralized IA can provide better security and standards.
- As with the Network, the portion of IA utilized by schools and libraries would be eligible for e-rate support.

To Recap

- The State could help the school and libraries by creating contracts, by establishing a state network, and by providing statewide e-rate coordination.
- The State could benefit by receiving e-rate funding for the e-rate eligible utilization of a state network and Internet Access.

- Districts – 433   (154)
- Schools – 831   (1200)
- Students – 144,418   (500,000)
- $ per student - $28
      ($70)
- State Average Discount – 68%
      (82%)
- Districts that applied – 197   (154)
- Schools that applied – 57   (1200)
- Libraries that applied – 47   (450)
- Consortia that applied – 2   (7)

School Data – www.opi.mt.gov and SLD Data Retrieval Tool

- FRN Requests – 1202
- FRNs Funded – 1162
- FRNs Denied – 40
- 2007 Pre-Discount Request - $6,617,422.98
- 2007 E-rate Request - $4,670,706.58
- 2007 Committed Funding - $4,068,876.60
- 2007 Disbursement - $2,618,134.12

How Do We Get 100% Participation?

- Marketing – Something state government normally does not do.
- You have to prove to the Governor and the Legislature that you will save the taxpayers money.
- You have to prove to the school administration that you will save their district money.
- You have to prove to the school tech coordinators and e-rate coordinators that you are going to make their life simpler (SMCs and e-rate support).

For E-rate, What do we do first?

- Hire someone to be your state e-rate coordinator.
  1. This person has to be knowledgeable in the program – bad advice destroys confidence
  2. Short term could be a consultant along with a state person
  3. Long term should be a state person
- Establish an e-rate listserve.
- Outreach by having regional face-to-face meetings and in-house training sessions.
- Establish a working group that includes service providers and coordinators from DOE and Library Agency.

For a State Network, what do we do first?

- Market the idea to Governor and Legislature.
- Market the idea to major network users such as K-12, Universities, Community Colleges and State Agencies.
- Establish an e-rate eligible State Master Contract for telecom services.
- Build it and they will come.

Don't think you are alone.

- Many other states have gone, or are going through the same process.
- We have worked with California, Ohio, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Alaska because we have already done what you and they are wanting to do.
- How can we help?

If we can help in any way…

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